

COMMON BRITISH OFFICIAL PERFINS

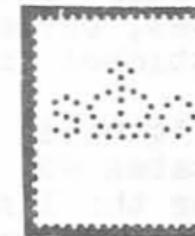
by Jack Brandt

In going through Great Britain packets from the sales circuit, I have recently added some fairly common official Perfins to my collection, and a few not so common ones. It made me wonder if the average collector is aware that some of these items are of an official nature. Here is information about a few:

The DS/IR Perfin (Figure 1) was used from about 1937 - 1966 by the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, which had offices in many places throughout Great Britain. It is known on over 40 different stamps, including a few commemoratives. It is interesting to look for since it is fairly common in some issues, but gets more difficult in others. The Perfins are commonly found inverted, reversed, and reversed-inverted, as well as upright.



D S
I R



S(C)O



H M
S O



Fig. 1

Fig. 2

Fig. 3

Fig. 4

Most collectors are aware of the HM/SO Perfin (Figure 3) used by Her (His) Majesty's Stationery Office. This department started out using the S(Crown)O Perfin (Figure 2), probably in the early 1920's, and it was in use to the mid to late 1940's. It is known on nearly 50 stamp issues, and it is fairly easy to get on a few of them, but presents a challenge to complete. The Perfin is known inverted and double, but is rare in these conditions.

Figure 3 shows the common HM/SO Perfin, which came into use in 1949. It is known on about 60 stamp issues, and is still in use. It is known on the 1951 4d Festival of Britain and the 1953 2½d Coronation commemoratives, both of which I have in my collection. The Perfin is usually found in an upright position, although on recent large high values in the definitive decimal set, it is also found reversed and reading up. Doubles are known, but are not common. I have noted the 1d QEII (Wilding portrait) double inverted, and the 2½d Wilding double upright.

Figure 4 shows another HM/SO Perfin, which is not so common. As the illustration shows, it does not appear to be too well constructed, with the M lines particularly not even straight. It is thought that this Perfin may have come between the S(Crown)O Perfin and the other HM/SO one. Possibly it was a wartime provisional. Cancellations of 1944 and 1949 are known. More research is needed. So far it has been reported on the following George VI issues: 2d pale orange, 2½d light ultramarine, 3 d pale violet, 2/6 yellow